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ABSTRACT

Classroom speaking poses a unique opportunity for the evaluation and the clarification of human values. Value clarification is possible when a specific method is followed that encourages potential behavior change on the part of the speaker. Value clarification can thus be usefully applied by speech communication teachers as a natural, integral part of persuasive speeches. Certain techniques, such as the outline process, the value grid, and the speaker's identification with the topic, can help students to create final speech experiences in which they achieve an action or modify their own values and the values of others. (A technical grid, a technical plot outline form, and an illustration of a rhetorical strategy outline for achieving a persuasive/ethical goal are attached.) (RL)

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# TOWARD A VALUE CLARIFICATION RHETORIC: A METHOD FOR TEACHING ETHICS/VALUES IN THE BASIC SPEECH COURSE

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## ABSTRACT

Classroom speaking poses a unique opportunity for evaluation and clarification of human values. Value clarification is possible when a specific method is followed which encourages potential behavior change on the part of the speaker. This paper purports to show that certain techniques, such as the outline process, the value grid, and the speaker's identification with the topic may help the person to be the speech. Several specific examples are cited which indicate the method proposed has some validity. Additional research is suggested in order to enable others to replicate the values or ethical clarification process.

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TOWARD A VALUE CLARIFICATION RHETORIC:
A METHOD FOR TEACHING VALUES/ETHICS IN THE BASIC SPEECH COURSE

There are a variety of speeches given in a basic speech course. Each type of speech could enable a student to understand himself in a "value clarifying way" if the method I propose has relevance. A value clarifying way simply means the student will perceive meaning and worth in what he is doing. Furthermore, he will observe behavior change because he has utilized the value clarifying method in the preparation process as well as the actual delivery of the speech.

## The Warm Up Speech--The Value of Self Disclosure

Many teachers of speech require an opening ice breaker type of speech. What I require is a self disclosure speech in which the student selects an object that has meaning to him and relates to that object as a means of self disclosure. One student selected his wallet and proceeded to take out two or three items of meaning or worth and told the class why these objects had value to him.

Another warm up speech is the hypothetical speech: Suppose you had a million dollars, what would you do with the money? I have used this as a dyadic warm up experience to get students to share a value frame of reference.

All speech types, then, should lead a student toward a better understanding of not only his own beliefs, attitudes, and values but also enable him to better relate to his peer in subsequent speeches.

## Freedom of Topic Selection--The Value of Self-Confidence Choice

Freedom of topic selection, which often becomes a struggle for some students, can be and even should be a value clarifying, self-confidence building, success oriented experience. Even the simple visual aid or sales presentation speech gives the student the "value experience" of selecting a topic that has real interest to him. A famous after dinner speaker once said, "there are few assets which can so quickly help a person to success in life as the ability to speak reasonably well."[1] Many students are able to successfully improve their speaking ability. A significant number of students value rhetoric as the art of practical discourse. Others choose speech as the means by which they can achieve the faculty of discovering in any situation the available means of persuasion.

## The Function of Rhetoric--Clarifying Values/Ethics

With this above overview let me now focus on the central purpose of this paper: What is the central function of rhetoric in the teaching of a basic speech course? For me, the implicit and implied purpose of rhetoric is to help the student develop a value clarifying experience to the end that the topic selection becomes more than an academic experience. Alan Alda put it most succinctly during an address at Drew University on the value problem in American society, "perhaps the central value concern today is the difference between what we say and what we do."[2] So, the art of practical discourse (rhetoric) or a value clarifying rhetoric, should enable the student to bridge the gap between what he says in his speech and what action he ultimately takes concerning his speech. The culminating speaking experience in most

basic courses is the final informative/persuasive speech to secure action or modify the belief, attitude, or value structure of the audience. In essence, for me, the final speech should give the student not only the technique to be his speech or to do his speech but seriously challenge others to modify their value priorities. Richard Weaver in his small paperback book, The Ethics of Rhetoric, places the term rhetoric or persuasive speaking in a value clarifying context when he says, "the central function of rhetoric is to crystallize and transmit human values."[3] So, the balance of this paper will focus on a specific methodology that enables me to achieve a modicum of "success" as I lead students through the final speech experience--the speech to achieve action or modify one's values and the values of others.

## Topic Selection as a Means of Clarifying Values

The first step in the value clarifying process is to challenge the student very early in the semester to select topics that he feels are of value or worth to him. The freedom of selection is the earliest part of the value clarifying experience since students will generally choose topics that relate to their own "value world." The last thing a student should do is select a topic or do a speech just for academic purposes. If a value is that which a student ranks high on his list of concerns, if a value is that which he spends a good part of his enjoyable life doing, then the student should have the freedom to start where he is. However, thinking clearly about values is a difficult matter. Thomas Ogletree, former professor of theological ethics at Vanderbilt University, now Dean of the Theological School, Drew University, says, "we cannot imagine a concrete experience or activity that isn't laden with values of some sort."[4] Thus, topic selection is most crucial. All I ask of students, with reference to the final major speech on persuasion, is that they select a current topic which they sincerely and seriously want to research. Moreover, the topic selected should help the class know more about the problem in order that the listeners may change their values, beliefs, and attitudes--if not essentially their behavior or lifestyles. It is imperative for the topic to be selected well in advance of a major speaking date so the student has adequate time to allow material from the print media to impinge on him with an acute sense of "pertinent pique." That is, the most persuasive speech will be on that topic which is most controversial as well as most current. These two criteria, current and controversial, when added to the student's sincere concern for the problem will help the student begin the "value clarifying experience" in a most cogent manner. So, selecting the topic is an enterprise well worth the time since the ultimate evaluation by the instructor and students will focus on the speaker's inventive abilities. Selecting one's own topic, finding one's own materials, is a most essential part of what many speech texts call the ethos or credibility of the speaker. Students and professors know when the student "feels" or intends to "live" his speech. He sounds believable.

## The Outline Impact on Audience Values

The second step in the value clarifying experience of preparing for the persuasive speech is to give the student a clear outline framework which will enhance the gathering of materials that will fit the outline form. Carroll Arnold[5] at Penn State carefully pointed out to his students that form and content are inseparable. Having been through a variety of speaking experiences,

as well as small group process experiences, the students should be better able to understand the audience to whom they speak. Before the outline can be given the "meaty words" to fill the skeletal structure the student should be aware of how to gather material (evidence) to fit the outline.

## Values Evidence--The Interview and Poll

Two specific types of evidence will enable the student to move beyond the print gathering approach to speech writing--as important as current print sources are! The poll and the interview will greatly help the student do some reality talking with his peers and power people. For example, I require the students to talk with no fewer than 25 persons. Also, I require them to talk with at least one person who has some power to effect change. In addition to the poll and interview the student must tell the class why the topic is important, meaningful, or of value to him.

## The Value of Experiential Speaking

Experiential speaking is vital to value formulation. Several concrete experiences should be cited by the student to indicate why the topic is more than just an academic exercise for a grade. For example, the student who proposed: We should boycott grapes came with a sign or placard and waved it in front of the audience. After the speech the sign went in the trash can... so did her speech! The student who says write or visit your congressman--and never has...is not experiencing value clarifying rhetoric as I teach it! So, doing what one says is the hallmark of a value clarification rhetoric. "Experiential stuff" must be part of the written outline. Also, current print sources must be used to back major assertions, solutions, and strategies.

## The Technical Plot Outline--A Values Technique

An important part of the value clarification method is to use the outline process which I call the Meiswinkel/Monroe motivated sequence.[6] The outline has four central concepts to be conveyed. First, the writer gains attention, establishes a need to know relationship with the audience, then states the central propositional sentence to the audience. Next, a clear pro/con analysis of one major argument against the proposition is clearly explicated. Then, two good reasons are proposed for the adoption of the proposition of policy. Finally, the student selects the best solution, amplifies it, and then carries forth a specific "strategy" to implement the solution. The strategy part is what the student has done or experienced that will in reality help him achieve his solution as well as facilitate the clarification of his values. He becomes his speech in the strategy process.

## The Values Grid

Another aid that should help the student with the outline process is the values grid[7]--a set of seven steps or questions that will further help clarify values. The grid is self-explanatory. The student takes the topic or a central issue inherent in the topic and runs that idea through the value grid.

## Ethical Leadership--Student/Professor Contact

Only one step remains in the method for teaching values in a basic speech course. The final part of the process is the student's interaction with me. What I usually require is a Student Record Sheet which will enable the student to see where he is, academically, before the final value speech is given. Any major grade problem requires an office interview. Many students come to discuss the final speech. I feel I have a moral obligation to engage students in one to one conversation as frequently as possible. In doing this I am able to show respect and concern for the worth of the individual student.

## Toward Values Realization Teaching

Three assertions by Thomas Ogletree from his article "What Do We Mean By Values?"[8] will act as a partial summary and rationale for my value clarification style of teaching:

1. Values identify the things we prize and consider worth promoting and protecting. They provide standards to guide our choices and actions.

2. We usually find we have need of supportive communities that share in general our values and help sustain our commitment to them.

3. Moral values concern our ways of relating to other persons as centers of meaning and value in their own right. Yet moral values cut across all other values...

Sc we can see that if the student prizes his topic selection, he will feel more like promoting his concerns with others. Of course central to his feeling "up" for his classroom presentation is the sensitive support system given by an attentive class. Not only should the class support him by listening, they should also differ with his thesis objectively in order to help him become more persuasive. Some can even help him by suggesting places to find evidence or people to talk to for interviews. In essence speech making should be a moral value concern since moral values--what is right or wrong--cut across all other values.

Maybe, as a writer once said concerning rhetoric, "the flaw in the sophistic is moral"--meaning our goal should be to help the student be the best person or the good man speaking well. This is the total experience of value clarification.

FOOTNOTES

1. Attributed to Chauncy Depew, railroad lawyer and politician, who is best remembered as an orator, a wit, and after dinner speaker. Depew served two terms as U.S. senator from New York. (1899-1911)

2. Alan Alda, "What Are Your Values" excerpt from a commencement address at Drew University, May 1979, as recorded in Drew, Vol. I, No. 1, September, October 1979, p. 16.

3. Richard C. Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1953), pp. 3-26. The observation attributed to Weaver is based on a study of Weaver by Ralph Eubanks and Virgil Baker as reported in their article, "Toward an Axiology of Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech (April 1962), p. 159. My study of Weaver corroborates their assertion concerning the centrality of rhetoric as an ethical and value clarification experience for the rhetor. See especially Weaver's comment that "rhetoric is an offshoot of ethical studies" (title page). Thus rhetorical experiences should enable the rhetor to become a self-actualizing person (Maslow) through the value clarifying observations and contact.

4. Thomas W. Ogletree, "What Do We Mean By Values?" Church School, Vol. 12, No. 3, November 1979, p. 23. Ogletree was professor of theological ethics at Vanderbilt University.

5. See especially John F. Wilson and Carroll C. Arnold, Public Speaking as a Liberal Art, 4th edition (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1978). Arnold, in classroom lectures, maintained an important correlation exists between form and content. I understand this to mean some structure is imperative for clear communiction to occur.

6. See Appendix for model of the Meiswinkel/Monroe Technical Plot motivated sequence outline.

7. See Appendix for the "Value Grid" found in numerous value clarification texts. See Sidney Simon, Leland Howe, and Howard Kirschenbaum, Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies. (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1972). This text contains Louis Rath's Value Grid.

8. Ogletree, op.cit., p. 3.

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See also the Winter, 1980, issue of American Educator published by the American Federation of Teachers, especially the articles by Bruno Bettelheim, "Education and the Reality Principle," p. 10 and William J. Bennett and Edwin J. Delathe's article, "A Moral Education," p. 6. The entire issue is devoted to the issue of values in American education as these values relate to education and morality.

See also Lawrence Kohlberg, The Psychology of Moral Development, Harper and Row, 1981, as reviewed in Psychology Today, August, 1981, by Daniel and Sidney Callahan.

ADDENDUM

"Universities Are Turning Out Highly Skilled Barbarians," U.S. News and World Report, November 10, 1980, p. 57f. An interview by Alvin Sanoff with Steven Muller, President, Johns Hopkins University. The writer interviewed Muller February 10, 1981 to corroborate the statements attributed to Muller.

"New at Harvard: Self Assessment 101," The New York Times, February 1, 1981, N.P. A report by Ann Crittenden concerning the popular new course at Harvard, "designed to help students discover who they are so they can better determine what they want to do."

APPENDIX I

L. B. Meiswinkel

## VALUES GRID

PURPOSE

The Values Grid usually drives home the point that few of our beliefs or actions fit all seven of the valuing processes. This activity indicates what steps we must take in order to develop stronger and clearer values.

PROCEDURES

Name 5 or 6 issues or problems

| | ISSUES | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | |
| ETC. | | | | | | | | |

The seven numbers heading the columns on the right-hand side of the paper represent the following seven questions:

1. Are you proud of (do you prize or cherish) your position?
2. Have you publicly affirmed your position?
3. Have you chosen your position from alternatives?
4. Have you chosen your position after thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons and consequences?
5. Have you chosen your position freely?
6. Have you acted on or done anything about your beliefs?
7. Have you acted with repetition, pattern or consistency on this issue?

The teacher can read these seven questions to the students, or write them on the board, or the student can write the key words (those that are underlined) at the top of each column. The students then answer each of these seven questions in relation to each issue. If you have a positive response to the question on top, put a check in the appropriate box. If you cannot answer the question affirmatively, leave the box blank.

Source: The grid was developed by Louis E. Raths, mentor of Sidney B. Simon--as reproduced in Meeting Yourself Halfway by Sidney B. Simon (Argus Communications, 1974), p. xiv.

Technical Plot Outline
Dr. Meiswinkel - Speech

APPENDIX II

SPEAKER _____ TOPIC _____

CLASS _____ TYPE OF SPEECH to actuate

DATE _____ TIME LIMIT 6 minutes

| Biblio, Reference and Rubrics (strategy) | INTRODUCTION Complete Sentence | Logical Supports and factors of attention |
|---|---|---|
| Attention | I | |
| Need | II | |
| Purpose (proposition of policy) | III | |
| Definition | IV | |
| Preview | V | |
| | **BODY** Complete Sentence | |
| Both Side Analysis | I<br>A<br>1<br>2<br>3<br>B<br>1<br>2<br>3 | |
| Transition | ( ) | |
| Your Position | II Why?<br>A<br>1<br>2<br>3<br>B<br>1<br>2 | |
| Transition | ( ) | |
| Plan of Action Solution | III How?<br>A<br>1<br>2<br>3<br>B What?<br>1<br>2 | |
| | **CONCLUSION (write out)** | |
| Restatement | I<br>A<br>B<br>C | |
| Final Appeal to Action (residual) | II | |

APPENDIX III

A VALUES RHETORIC MODEL OR RHETORICAL STRATEGY OUTLINE
FOR ACHIEVING A PERSUASIVE/ETHICAL GOAL

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Attention | I | Will Rogers once said, "an uneducated man steals from the freight train while an educated man may steal the whole railroad." |
| Need | II | I'm asking you to take a close look at the leadership of educated people in our society today. |
| Proposition | III | All leaders should prize ethical behavior in their profession. |
| Define | IV | By "leaders" I mean, at least, college, business and governmental... "ethical behavior" is that part of a larger value system that implicitly and explicitly evokes credibility, character, and TRUST! |
| Preview | V | You ask why? because unethical behavior is counterproductive...because ethical behavior is crucial as a role modeling example for tomorrow's leaders. Before I amplify my solution and describe specifically what I have done--strategically--to implement my proposition, let's look at a major argument why some leaders find it difficult to be ethical. |

Body

Making the proposition objective

I. I suppose there may be an ethical dilemma for some leaders.

A. Competition is cut throat.

Metaphor as a persuasive device

1. The business world is dog eat dog said one person.

2. It is survival of the fittest said another. The lesser of two evils must be practiced or your workers will be out of a job.

Appeal to vested interest--financial

B. Competition must be creative.

1. The candy business appeals to the sweet tooth of the dog...but Hershey Foods President Richard Zimmerman told me "we will not sacrifice quality or our name."

2. "If survival depends on the lesser of two evils, I do not choose to live in business," said Ken Dillabough, President, Dill Products, "my employees subscribe to my philosophy."

Transition

So while cut throat or jugler vein tactics may be part of the competitive world of survival, we must also see that creative ethical options do exist.

Proposition restated

II. Why then, you ask, must the key leaders--college, business, and governmental--be ethical?

The sum and substance of a values rhetoric--is the ethical man giving good reasons.

A. Because unethical behavior is counterproductive.

1. Note "the erosion of values" in college (Rhodes).

a. A college president charged with theft, (Chronicle, September 2, 1980)

b. Four scientists falsify data (Chronicle, ibid.).

c. 46% of students will cheat if given the chance (Newsweek, May 26, 1980).

2. Note the erosion in business...

a. The TV lottery fix is familiar to all.

b. The Munsingwear patent stealing cost the company $32 million.

3. The political watergates and scams have further eroded the ethical soil...

a. Mr. Nixon lives an ignominious life (Bulletin, June 18).

b. Congressmen, a senator, and others are affected (current news).

So, not only is it counterproductive...in the short run you live, but in the long run you are dead, but my research shows...

B. That positive ethical role models are crucial for tomorrow's leaders.

1. This was revealed to me in conversations with Muller (Johns Hopkins), Wachman (Temple), Rhodes (Cornell) (see Of Colleges, Freight Trains, and Railroads, September 24, 1980), as well as almost all the 10 state college presidents with whom I've talked.

a. I will be meeting with Bloomsburg's President McCormick on July 31, 1981.

b. I await the response to transcripts I sent to Muller, Wachman, and Oswald (Penn State).

2. Look at the example of some key business leaders.

a. Edward Jordan, former CEO, Conrail, now Dean of the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration at Cornell, told me "business leaders must be up front."

b. Fletcher Byrom, Chairman of the Board, Koppers, told me June 3 that "his corporation will fire anyone who takes a bribe."

c. Etc. from a random sample of 20 more.

3. So let's look at some government leaders.

a. In my conference with Senator John Stauffer, Thursday, June 25. Senator Stauffer is Chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

b. In Harrisburg recently (June 4) I met with Representative William D. Hutchinson, who is Chairman of the House Ethics Committee.

Transition — You may now see that ethical leadership is a productive part of our society. There are numerous key leaders providing ethical modeling behavior for future college, corporate, and governmental executives. Which leads me to the most important part of my speech.

III. How can we get our key leaders to prize ethical behavior in their profession?

A. Be a positive ethical role model.

1. Work honestly, assiduously, and let others see your productivity!

2. Talk openly in TRUST with others!

3. Live your ethics as if in church, synagogue, or parish!

4. Be educated in ethics! Attend workshops and seminars!

5. Put your money where your mouth is! Give time, money, expertise, to ethical candidates--which leads me to one specific course of action.

B. What have I done to implement my proposition of policy?

1. I have begun a rhetorical campaign to get Representative William D. Hutchinson elected the next Supreme Court Justice of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

a. As chairperson of the Northeastern Caucus for Ethics in Government:

1) I am organizing a major rally at the Buck Hill Inn, Buck Hill, Pa., September 11, 1981, 8:15 p.m.

a) Prestige political and theatrical persons will be present.

b) The event will draw key leadership from the northeastern counties and elsewhere.

2) I have contacted and will continue to contact other support persons via mail, phone and in person.

Whatever you do...those who read this speech or hear it...I want you to learn about the candidates' ethical behavior--after all Bob Edgar was elected a U.S. Congressman because his credentials were and have remained ethical.

Join with me for not only the northeastern region and the eastern part of the state, but for the common goal of the whole state of Pennsylvania.

## Conclusion

I. Reflect! and reflect well this coming fall--the critical years are still ahead.

A. Competition may be cut throat but ethical behavior will creatively overcome.

B. It's high time we got productivity for our tax dollar and not counterproductive behavior. The role models have been cited. They far surpass the unethical--but grave harm can be done if we neglect to choose ethical behavior.

C. Our role model candidate is an educated legislator and jurist, an active churchman, and an ethical friend to many. Vote for William D. Hutchinson for the State Supreme Court.

II. Time is running out! But it's never too late for us to take over the railroad.